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No. 19.

A PSALM OF THE RAIN.

BY SARAH D. HOBART.

Over the mountain walls the rain,
Moans the rain, weeps the rain,
Psalm of anguish and prayer of pain
Sighs the sorrowful rain.
Yet still the silver drops are bright,
And ringing rivulets rush to the sea,
Birds sing in the silver light—
Lilles bloom on the laughing lea.

Over my life sweeps the sorrowful rain,
Solms rain, sighing rain,
Prayer of anguish, pain of pain
I pass with the sorrowful rain.
Yet still I know Heaven's plumes are fair,
And the soft light falls on the sea of gold;
And while wings wave in the amber air,
And the Father smiles as He smiles of old!

A WOMAN'S VOW.

BY MARY E. WOODSON.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE EVIDENCE.

Tom Jones had been under the especial surveillance of the police. He had kept in his shed with singular closeness, and without any visible pretext, for the past week. Some one had found him lurking suspiciously about the railway depot on the morning of the discovery of the bloody hat, and he had been seized by Sub-inspector Kennedy.

Jones had appeared in an agony of fear and remorse, and requested to be taken before a justice of the peace, to whom alone he declared he would reveal what he knew of the singular disappearance of Mr. Tressylian.

He then declared that for months past Ralph Thornton had been urging him to join him in robbing their master, and that for a long time had refused.

The scheme was at last arranged to waylay him as he sometimes went in person to receive his rents, and on his return to rob him.

The Ralph Thornton had accordingly informed him about noon, on the Saturday previous, of the errand upon which Mr. Tressylian had gone to Squire Cartairs, and had said he had purposely involved his master's business matters in such a manner that he could not possibly return until after dark.

That on the same evening Mrs. Tressylian becoming alarmed had appealed to Ralph Thornton to go in search of her husband, and that Thornton had called him at once, and the two had started together. That they had met Mr. Hartman whom Ralph Thornton was about to strike, supposing it to be their master; but that on discovering his mistake, Thornton had made a pretence of asking Mr. Hartman to turn back with them, and had hurried on lest he might consent. That immediately afterward they had heard some one coming toward them. That the person had stumbled and uttered an exclamation, and in this manner they knew it to be Mr. Tressylian. That he, Tom Jones, had been seized with a sudden compunction of conscience, and had whispered Ralph Thornton, "that he might have all the money if he would do the deed alone, and suffer him, Jones, to take a turn in the field."

That Ralph Thornton, with an oath had signified his assent, and bade him go for a coward. He had then stepped aside from the road, being afraid to go far, and had heard Thornton knock Mr. Tressylian down, and drag him on the opposite side. That he heard his master exclaim, "Ah, rogue, will you kill me?" when unable to endure it longer, he rushed back and begged Thornton to spare the master's life. But Thornton had replied, "Pox, fool," and had strangled him. That Thornton had then jumped up, saying he had the roll of money, and they must be off.

Questioned as to what became of the money, Jones replied that he had never seen it. That they had gone a short distance, but could not tell how far, when Thornton said it would be dangerous to keep the money for the present, and that he would hide it somewhere among the bushes, "until the affair had blown over." That Thornton had then darted away, and left him for a time alone, shivering with the cold and fear. That Thornton had come back saying he was sick himself, and they had gone at last to Dunleath where it had been agreed that Thornton should stop for an hour or so, while he, Jones, should keep on to old Godwyn's.

Thornton had said when the clouds broke toward morning he would hurry back, and dispose of the body by throwing it into the river, or hiding it in the furze-brake.

That he, Jones, had come on later, and had overtaken Thornton in the hollow, when the latter, looking white and sick, had whispered to him "that all was right," and they had returned in silence to Coldham.

Upon this statement Ralph Thornton had been arrested amid the wildest excitement.

A mob soon gathered with loud yells, and he was with difficulty conveyed to the constabulary barracks, where he remained, under a strong guard for the night.

On Monday his preliminary trial came off. Tom Jones repeated his statement with entire exactness, and with very decided and unfeigned repugnance.

Ralph Thornton earnestly protested his innocence and upbraided Jones for his wicked falsehood. The latter, however, obstinately adhered to his story, and reviled upon his fellow-prisoner with bitter reproaches for having urged him to the



LILIAN THORNTON'S VOW.

"SHE HAD DRAWN ASIDE A VEIL THAT HAD ENVELOPED HER HEAD, AND TURNED TOWARD HIM A FACE OF STATUARY BEAUTY, WITH EYES THAT GLITTERED UNTO THEY RESEMBLED LIKE A TRANSPARENT BEFORE A BURNING LIGHT."

a large flat rock. He took up the bits of paper and found that they were two five-pence notes.

There was now no doubt but that the killing place of the money, for the possession of which a most barbarous murder had been committed, was discovered.

The river had been already dragged, and the examination was renewed not only in its voiceless depths, but in the furze-brake, and in all the neighboring ponds and ditches. The search was in vain, no trace of the body could be found.

The spot where the hat was found was just where Thornton would have been most apt to encounter Mr. Tressylian on his return. He knew that the master was going to receive a considerable sum of money. Mr. Tressylian had left Dunleath safe and well. Thornton's absence during the whole of the night had been most suspicious. The natural thing, had he failed to meet his employer, would have been to have returned at once to Coldham.

Bail was refused, and the prisoners were taken separately to the county jail, a strong force of the police surrounding them.

On inquiry it had been ascertained that Squire James Godwyn had paid to Mr. Tressylian the sum of two thousand pounds in liquidation of a mortgage held by Tressylian on the said Godwyn's estate, on the evening of the mysterious disappearance of the former.

The regular term of the county assizes was at hand, and on the day previous to its opening £1,000 in bank notes were discovered, underneath a large stone on the edge of the brake, not a hundred yards off the spot where the hat had been found, on the Dunleath road, on the Coldham land, not more than a quarter of a mile from Dunleath.

The ground which Ralph Thornton was supposed to have gone over, on the memorable night in question, had been, from day to day, the resort of hundreds of people from Coldham, the neighboring towns, and from N. in search of the money. There was scarcely a crypt that had not been examined or a stone that had not been turned over.

During the inquiry which had now extended to thirteen days, the Dunleath road, the lead mines, and the railway line had been gone over inch by inch and carefully examined, but as neither the body nor the money had been found, the mysterious murder was becoming more than ever mysterious.

Now, however, half a dozen men, among them Lewis Hartman, had gone out from the road on the borders of the brake. Hitherto the search had not been as diligent at this point, as every one believed the money to be somewhere in the brake.

Just here a fence separated the lands of Mr. Tressylian and of Squire James Cartairs, and at the side of this fence there were a great many stones that had been taken from time to time out of the fields, previous to their cultivation, and placed here.

These fields were now covered with rushes and whins. The fence was on a hill-side, and at times of floods the water would rush by it and through the passages under the fence.

It was under such circumstances, that since the evening of Mr. Tressylian's disappearance, there had not been a single dry day at Coldham, and the heavy rains had caused floods in several parts of the country.

While Hartman and his companions were passing along the side of this fence, looking into suspicious crevices, and turning over curiously-shaped stones, the attention of a man named Hood was attracted by two pieces of paper floating on a pool of water that encircled

of twelve men. It is needless for me to say."

"But, sir, you will not be hard on Ralph Thornton? He is so young; and he is not guilty, indeed he is not. You will not appeal to the passions or prejudices of those twelve ignorant men, who are often swept on to a final decision by the lashed-up froth of popular eloquence, irrespective of the underlying current of deep and earnest truth?"

"The truth, young lady, is of itself the destroying torrent that must sweep the prisoner into the eddying whirlpool of destruction below, irrespective of any impulse that I can give him."

"But, sir, I am that prisoner's sister. I have heard of your fatal gift of eloquence. Promise me at least that you will use no extraordinary effort to deprive Ralph Thornton of all the benefits of James Barrycourt's appeal in his behalf. Do not use your strength to throw him overboard at this last turning-point. Leave him the single frail spar upon which to struggle back to land once more."

"And empower him to hurl back with murderous hand to the death from which he escapes, those who would fain have saved him, as he has done before. No, I am an advocate of justice, not of mercy, and I work for the triumph of my cause as you women do for yours, only I use fair means. But content you; for though I should succeed, I promise you that in six months you will smile with the happy consciousness of your better day."

He felt no sympathy for the tie that bound all the tender emotions of Lilian Thornton's nature to the prisoner whose honor and life were at the mercy of the law. The savage part of his nature struck up its low growl, its tigerish ferocity, as he remembered that there was something in his power, some one whom he could hold up to public condemnation, upon whom he could visit the full force of retributive justice, with the "in talionis" for his weapon of offence and defense.

"May the richest blessings of a God of mercy attend you if you heed my prayer," whispered the girl, eagerly. "May the bitterest curse of a broken-hearted and disgraced family pursue you through life if you refuse. Will you promise?"

"To speak as the law bids me, or perish with my perjured tried! Importune me no more. Seek mercy from the fools who fancy that to them mercy has been shown."

"Then mark me, Earle Templeton, as sure as there is a Heaven above us, and your bitter malignity, roused to fury by I know not what, triumphs over the right—as sure as Ralph Thornton, though he were truly guilty from his own misdeeds, shall hold up to public condemnation as the vicious victim of your own private wrongs, so surely shall a time come when you would move Heaven and earth to undo your own great crime, when for one word from the lips of the man you destroy, you would crawl on your knees to that felon's grave, and pour out your heart in a wild frenzy for pardon of Heaven and him."

He winced like a man under torture at her mad words—perhaps she had touched him to the quick—but he rallied in an instant, and stronger than Achilles, covered the one vulnerable point in his armor.

His harsh laugh sounded in her ear, as he rose to his feet.

"I would hang him for his impudent asseverations of innocence, in the teeth of undoubted evidence. Go, we are at the scene of action. Let Thornton's advocate do his best, as I shall do mine; and each of us will abide by the result."

CHAPTER XVI.

CONDAMNED.

The court at W. was again startled in no ordinary degree. Tom Jones was once more brought before the bar, and with woe and earnest adoration to Heaven, pleaded "Not guilty."

He then made an entire recitation of his late confession, protesting that he had been mad, and knew not what he had done. He had been so startled and horrified by the murder of Mr. Tressylian, that his mind had been all upset, and he should not be held responsible for anything he had uttered. The charge he had brought against Ralph Thornton had been all a whimsical creation of his own disordered fancy, and the young man was, with himself, entirely innocent of the charge. He had not had the shadow of a foundation for any part of the indictment which he had caused to be brought against Ralph Thornton, to whom he had every reason to be grateful, and as Heaven was his witness he believed the prisoner at the bar to be as ignorant of the cause and method of Mr. Tressylian's murder, as was his honor at the bench.

The counsel for the defense declared that the court had now no just reason to detain his client in custody, and urged that a "nolle prosequi" be entered on the part of the prosecuting attorney.

The court, however, decided that the evidence against the prisoner was sufficient to warrant the continuance of the trial, and after some further production of circumstantial evidence, the arguments began.

Mr. Barrycourt dwelt upon the previous spotless character of the prisoner. There were a hundred desperados even in Coldham, men who were known to set the law at defiance, and yet gifted with diabolical cunning to defraud the ends of justice—who would have robbed, sly and even murdered, Mr. Tressylian for a hundredth part of the sum of money the unfortunate gentleman was known to have had about him on the evening of the murder, and even the

CHAPTER XV.

THE TRIAL.

The regular session of the court being at hand, the grand jury at once found a true bill, and "The Thornton murder case" was placed on docket for immediate trial.

But little additional evidence was produced, or indeed supposed to be wanting.

The sheriff had been compelled to go

earle templeton had returned to N. at night, and on the morning of the third day took the train for the scene of the trial. The rigid lines about his mouth had, if possible, grown severer in expression, and the pale, intellectual face might have warned every beholder that this man was made of sterner stuff than the clay and mire from which ordinary humanity is moulded. The frown on his brow deepened as the train halted for a moment at the Coldham station, but the gloom and seeming abstraction of his manner did not change.

The whistle had sounded again, when some one touched him on the sleeve.

"If you please, sir, you have the only vacant seat beside you.

The voice was a woman's—the tone, one of singular sweetness and melancholy.

Earle templeton looked up. And the young men in that division of the car, each wishing the appeal had been made to himself, wondered that the inflexible features which they had been studying for the last half hour, did not soften or grow brighter, as his eyes rested for one brief moment on the form of the wonderful, brilliant beauty before him.

The man whom she had addressed, however, glanced around, as though to gain evidence necessary to be mentioned here.

A piece of gros grain blue ribbon, about four and a half wide, had been discovered since the previous trial, but a yard or so out of the road from the spot where the bloody hat and hand were found.

When this ribbon was brought into court the prisoner, Ralph Thornton, was observed to turn very pale, and covering his face with his hands, tears had been seen to trickle through his fingers. Being asked if he recognized it, he affirmed that it was his wife's hair ribbon, and that she had put it festively about his head on the evening of Mr. Tressylian's disappearance, just as he had been summoned by the wife of the missing man to go in quest of her husband—that he had forgotten the ribbon and must have dropped it when he wandered from the road.

Tom Jones had not yet been brought into court. He had been detained in separate custody, and was now introduced by the sheriff. The prosecuting attorney finding a noose at the end of the ribbon, had his suspicions aroused, and showing it to Jones, asked him if he had ever seen it before.

Tom Jones answered readily that he had, to his sorrow, for Ralph Thornton had showed it to him as they left Coldham, saying he intended to strangle Mr. Tressylian with it, as a shot might be heard, and any bloody weapon would testify against him if found.

Lilian Thornton in the meantime had gone into N. She had gone from office to office beseeching the lawyers to defend her brother, who was as innocent of the murder as they themselves, and she and her mother would beggar themselves to pay for their services. She had besought a young attorney of more than average ability, tawny and fair, with her dark, large eyes, and such a total want, so he thought, of the usual diffidence, whether real or affected, of girls of her age.

"And what, sir, do you think will be the nature of that verdict?"

He glanced with surprise and increasing displeasure at this pale, young girl, with such strange, wild impetuosity in her large, dark eyes, and such a total want, so he thought, of the usual diffidence, whether real or affected, of girls of her age.

"It is not exactly probable that my opinion would be a fair exponent of that

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bitterest personal enemies of Ralph Thornton could never have dreamed of associating him with the most violent violation of the decencies, unless the evidence against every conviction of those evils should be overwhelming in the extreme; but when that charge was made, glib and unctuous asunder, the words of a man who had been more than a father to the prisoner, because the law of nature had not imposed the death of a parent or the effusion of hundred bloods, though the evidence should be for the last degree damning, there were men who had known the prisoner best, his heart and soul, in spite of every effort of conscience, induces in his innocence of circumstantial evidence, to believe in his innocence of the fact. But when the evidence rested entirely upon the whimsical phantasies of a madman's confused brain, the charge might be judged by a jury of lunatics, but could never surely be gravely considered by twelve intelligent gentlemen.

All eyes were turned upon Earle Templeton, as he rose to his feet. He deep voice, as distinct in its intonation as the notes of a clarion, echoed through the lofty dome.

If this were the first occasion on which blood-stained and wretched plausibility as an excuse for monstrous crimes, the jury of gentlemen before him might indeed carefully reweigh the evidence as they returned a verdict, but such shallow strata, germs of guilty conscience buried by the fearful penalty of the law, had become so natural a sequence of crimes that it was looked for as a matter of course. Numbers of men could be found to testify to the unscrupulousness of the prisoner, Tom Jones, but not the slightest suspicion of a disordered intellect had ever been awakened amongst his most intimate associates. No, Carroll Treysian had been murdered, and reviving as was the thought by the man he had so trusted, the man who stood before them arraigned by the confession of his accomplice for the monstrous deed.

The crowd in the hall of justice had grown denser and denser, until an upturned hand of human faces, anxious, eager, intense, looked toward the judges' seat, and the young and graceful speaker, the thunder of whose voice and the vivid lighting of whose words held them bound as with a spell of weird mesmerism. The checks of young men, whose impassioned fancies were the easier caught and transported by the speaker's eloquence, burned with a consuming fire, and old men shook their heads as though inspired anew by the majesty of the legal N. mes.

They had heard the evidence—closely-connected story of positive crime with the palpable motive, and if ever a case called for the prompt and severe action of the law, it was the one before them.

Alas, they had seen how the gifted but unfortunate victim to the wiles of an assassin had left his beautiful home and bride, never more to return or to look upon the light of another day. They had been told by the actual confession of his terrified accomplice, how he had been murdered by the watch to whom he had fully confided the nature of the journey upon which he had gone, how with the savage treachery of all utterly debased nature, he had selected the occasion on which he had been most trusted, amid the darkness of night and storm, as a time best suited to his purpose. He could not dwell upon the revolting details again, the waiting of the murderers on the lonely road for the returning hero, the final assault—the robbery so clearly proved, and the careful hiding of the murdered man's body! With the charge of the judge and the evidence before them, he left the prisoner in the hands of a jury, and bade them to open the doors of the sanctuary where the man slaves find refuge, to this master, if they dared.

This is a simple synopsis of the speaker's argument. In what language it was couched, with what ineffectual digressions of the law it was pointed, in all of which Earle Templeton seemed to say an oracle with the stamp of offended duty about him, Heaven knows our inability to relate.

The jurors sat during the two hours' discussion like twelve pieces of statuary, the light of each eye—transparent notes of the sun and the mobile expression of each countenance, alone telling that they were men of reasoning faculties, swept on in spite of themselves by the young attorney's invincible demonstrations.

The counsel for the defence now rose to reply.

He reminded the jury of the previous adverse reputation of the prisoner at the bar, of his universal Christian charity and philanthropy, irreconcilable even with homicide, unless under the severest provocation.

The murder of Carroll Treysian was surrounded with a midnight of mystery that could never be cleared but before the high tribunal of God. That he had been murdered—murdered under circumstances of the most revolting cruelty the evidence might demonstrate. He was not prepared to point to the perpetrator of the deed. His duty was to show that his client was, despite the deposition of Jones, who deserved to be branded for all time as a second Titus Oates, as free from all participation in the horrid crime as was his honor on the bench.

The numbers wherever he might be had accomplished his fearful work, and had vanquished again with the burden of a secret known to himself and God. He dwelt upon the touching affection of the sister and wife of the prisoner, an affection which nature would have risen up to condemn had they been called upon as the prosecutor's attorney would represent the unfortunate young man before them. The wife, now thought to be dying, still declared her unshaken belief in his innocence. The sister waited outside the portals of the hall of justice, seeking simply for justice.

The jury were vastly impressed by the speaker's sarcasm and the astute lawyer followed up his advantage by reminders of men unjustly punished, poured forth in volumes of burst of fury emotion, and in closing his argument sternly claimed every reasonable doubt for the prisoner.

There was an expression of hope on the faces of the accused and his friends, as the learned counsel took his seat, and even the most prejudiced of his accusers, under the immediate influence of the speaker's fervent appeal, began to say themselves with a secret misgiving, "What if, after all, he should be innocent?"

There was a moment of silence, and Earle Templeton rose for the last time. He began with a meteor shower of caustic upon the argument of the counsel for the defense.

The fall of a human soul, he argued, was as often the result of a single thrust as of a continuous stage by the powers of evil. The sword's recoil was more easily arrested than the armed veteran.

He told the flushed, tempestuous person of spurious displays of feeling to-day being the gauge of secret action to-morrow? Every schoolboy had read of a Nero, now weeping pitiably that he had ever learned the art of writing, since he was

required to give his signature to a death-warrant, and soon becoming the amateur author of his best subjects. Or of a Caesar who Modest at one hour poisoning a Prince of Gauls; of another, engaged in the glorious exercises of her devotion; and the next, planning to-morrow's massacre of the Britons.

"The benefit of a doubt?" In the name of justice was there a point in the evidence where the shadow of a doubt could rest? This was not alone a case of circumstantial testimony, though that would be sufficient for conviction. The "still, small voice" of conscience had refused to be silenced in the house of the gods, and unctuous asunder, the words of a man who had been more than a father to the prisoner, because the law of nature had not imposed the death of a parent or the effusion of hundred bloods, though the evidence should be overwhelming in the extreme; but when that charge was made, glib and unctuous asunder, the words of a man who had been more than a father to the prisoner, because the law of nature had not imposed the death of a parent or the effusion of hundred bloods, though the evidence should be overwhelming in the extreme; but when that charge was made, glib and unctuous asunder, the words of a man who had been more than a father to the prisoner, because the law of nature had not imposed the death of a parent or the effusion of hundred bloods, though the evidence should be overwhelming in the extreme; but when that charge was made, glib and unctuous asunder, the words of a man who had been more than a father to the prisoner, because the law of nature had not imposed the death of a parent or the effusion of hundred bloods, though the evidence should be overwhelming in the extreme; 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something of my own to add that needs the construction of your experience, may it not be well to go over the whole to me here in a succinct narrative?"

"Certainly, and I hope neither of you are young and thoughtful enough to disagree with me when I pronounce my dear boy Eugene's meeting with me, a providential affair. I was on the very eve of a departure for Europe, where I intended finding needed mental rest in travelling for the past year, and had the accidents that introduced me to each other not occurred when it did, or had the results been so different then, I might never have seen him, or he never won to give me his confidence."

Eugene shuddered at her name.

"That is true," the doctor assented gravely. "It was a noble generous place of self-devotion in a youth, to peril a life full of promise and value in an effort to save an old man from a sudden and terrible death."

"Nay, my dear boy, do not attempt to lessen the noble bravery of the act, by saying that you were depressed and disappointed, and life seemed worthless at the moment. I am too fully experienced in all such momentary sensations to believe that they give the brain coldness, and the soul resolution. Such qualities spring from noble hearts and minds, and to them I owe my existence now, under Heaven's a mercy."

"I was driving doctor, with a new pair of horses, of whose temper and docility I had received strong assurance, but who became unaccountably alarmed at the sudden breaking of one of their traces. No sooner were they conscious of the accident than they began to run, and I had used all my strength and determination to stay their headlong course in vain. They flew like winged terrors, and the carriage, light and fragile as it was, seemed to dance behind them in the air. I braced myself in vain to retain my seat, my strength gave out, my brain whirled, and in a moment more I should have been thrown violently out upon the stones or dragged forward by the terrified animals, when my gallant preserver threw himself between me and sudden death, and received an injury in my behalf, from which he is scarcely yet recovered."

Judge Lester laid his hand affectionately on Eugene's shoulder as he spoke, and the young man with a brightened color again endeavored to claim all glory in the bravery of the action.

"Even before I had heard his name, his face appeared familiar to me—for his likeness to his father is remarkable in every way; and now in relation to that gentleman, I will tell you the little I gained in my acquaintance, for from the first I was interested by his bearing and manner, and often wished that his evident avoidance of strangers had not interfered with my cultivating a closer friendship.

"He belonged to a noble old Norman family of wealth and exceedingly lofty ideas, and gained their disapprobation by his love for a very sweet and winsome girl—the daughter of his tutor, who at the death of her father became a professional teacher of drawing.

"The persecution of his father and other members of his family only brought Mr. de Courcy's passion to a climax, and he irreversibly estranged his relatives by marrying and breaching their wrath.

"At first they subjected him to every variety of insult and reproach, and finally they drove him away from the place of his birth by persistent persecution.

"He came with his wife and baby to the United States, and for a time had a hard struggle for existence. While in extreme poverty he encountered his father's old valet, a person called Soubette, who had also educated with his family, and though this man he heard of the welcome news of a small inheritance being due him from his mother's estate, which it seems was to be paid unconditionally to him, or his agents, and had been kept back in the efforts to humble him into deserting and ignoring his poor young wife, which seemed to have been the family's object in their harsh actions toward him. At this time I was a lawyer in general practice, and Mr. de Courcy applied to me to obtain his claim, which I was soon able to do for him, together with the unpaid sum of the preceding years, which enabled him to begin life here in comparative comfort.

"I believe he bailed his troubles as passed, for he became cheerful and contented, and whenever we met displayed a most attractive and agreeable disposition."

When the judge had gone so far, he paused and took Eugene's hand with a fatherly pressure in his own.

"I never saw your mother's face, my dear boy," he said, sadly, "but I am convinced from her picture that she was a creature of rare and tender beauty, that your father's love for her was of the deepest and most ardent kind, as his uncontrollable grief at her loss evinces.

"She died very early, how I do not know, but I have always supposed her to have had some foreboding of her coming doom, and your orphanage; because so much that I have traced in these papers here was her suggestion and arrangement, tending to establish proofs of your birth and lineage, and of the rights from which your father was for a time banished by his love for her."

"Among the rest I understood that she had—ininitely small, but perfectly legible characters—traced on exceedingly fine paper, in leaves and filled into a locket, which she placed round your baby neck—the complete history of your claim to the De Courcy estate in case of your unmarried uncle's death; and I was assured by your father, the only time he ever spoke to me on the subject of these future rights, that in that small space was condensed evidence sufficient to prevent any spurious claims ever coming between you and your rights, since it were named fairly secreta, the knowledge of which must remain unknown to all but the De Courys."

Both Heatherston and Eugene offered exclamations simultaneously at this allusion. Each had reason to recognize and remember the secret paper.

"I see you have been here before," resumed the judge, looking from one to the other. "I am glad of it, for I can assure you it will be of the greatest importance our future operations, and besides has the value of a prophetic love from your mother's hand, my dear Eugene."

"Your father spoke of it when we parted; he had received notice from home of his father's death and his brother's failing health."

"A letter had come to him, filled with regrets for the past, and of course I friend-ship for the future, and he was going to France as he assured me, to secure his boy's future; as for his own, his hopes were buried in his darling wife's grave. He confessed to me that he had not written to them of her, that he never should name her, that he had never seen her, but condemned her for her humbug birth, when she was as noble and gracious as a queen. He never reached the shong of his native land—he died of a fever on the passage, as I have just learned, for until I

met Eugene I knew nothing further of his fate. Since then my secret inquiries have discovered that he died as I have stated, and his boxes, &c., being sent to his supposed widow's address, by the captain with whom he sailed, and who had known him passionately, must have first suggested the bad scheme of Soubette's daughter to whom his child was intrusted."

"No doubt, sir," acquiesced Heather-ton, ridding his head. "I have seen Mrs. Blanchard lately, and a woman more utterly unscrupulous or more completely at action in every movement and word, I never held."

Eugene shuddered at her name.

"I lived with her for years, this knowledge coming to me by instinct," he said, in a low thrilling voice. "I do not remember the time when I did not suspect her. I never believed in her affection for me, though at first, before she grew hardened and bitter, she used to affect fondness in her manner toward me. But that was before Violet's birth. When the dear innocent little beauty, whom I now almost love as my sister, once, was left to myself, and my miserable, sinless education, that had always been carried on at the whim and fancy of Mrs. Blanchard, was entirely neglected.

"I wandered over the house in an idle dreamy way, feeling the cloud that had always hung over me deepening in density, and wondering what I was made for, and why I lived at all.

"One night I awoke suddenly, and I saw her whom I had been taught to call mother standing like a ghost at my bedside. She looked toward me, but not at me, and her eyes were unlike any others I had ever beheld, in their deadness, distended vacuity.

"'You must go away,' she said, speaking in a muffled tone that was painfully strange to listen to, 'you must leave this house never to return, because your presence is a curse to us all, a disgrace and a shame. Listen,' and she leaned close to my pillow; 'if my child lives, I must kill you, because I cannot afford you to live together; take warning and go!'

"Remember I was only a lad then, and this interview filled me with fear and horror. I think I knew even then, that she walked and spoke in sleep; but I also knew and surmised enough of her waking thoughts, to feel that she had expressed nearly the tenor of her waking mind in her strange slumber.

"I had no one to speak to, not a living creature to whom to turn for advice or counsel. Mr. Blanchard always evaded me, and seemed anxious to be as little as possible in the house on all occasions, and there was no friend then in the world for me."

"Later when I began to be a man in years, when my warped mind bowed more than ever under the burden of its painful secret, I found what my soul yearned for—some one to love."

Dr. Heatherston made as though he would have interrupted his friend at this point; but Judge Lester gave him a warning look, and Eugene proceeded.

"I believe that reticence is the fault of my nature, and one of the fruits of that suspicious shrinking, that became its leading element in the years that I bore my secret aloft in my bosom.

"For once I will confess it, dear friends, and confess to you both, that a new feeling mixed with my existence, after meeting with Marian Barton, the daughter of the family I had been denied to both in former conversations.

"By some strange means she came to know, and understand Mrs. Blanchard.

"She never told me how; I could only surmise that as my reputed mother was obliged to stay all night at their house, once, during a terrible storm, she may have, in her habit of sleep walking and talking, disclosed to the vigilant girl her hidden secret.

"At all events she never met Mrs. Blanchard afterward, unless she was forced to her presence, and her evident aversion soon marked her as a victim to the revengeful woman's hate.

"I owe to Marian Barton my recent freedom from gloomy brooding, that bordered on madness; from her strong noble mind, which I drank in a new life, and began a new career.

"She awakened me, gave me strength, impulsion, ambition. She opened a future before me, and filled my mind with noble yearnings for a higher life. All my old clouds of distrust, misery, and torpor fell like a tattered garment off my shoulders, and I felt myself rising and soaring in a clear new day.

"Suddenly, without one word of preparation or warning, this idol fled from me, and my whole life fell into darkness that one wretched hour.

"She met me coldly, and yet there was something of sorrow in her voice as she spoke. I entreated her to see me alone, and when we were face to face she made me farewell forever, without one word of explanation, and rushing from me in distressful haste, left me alone with my broken heart."

Again Heatherston made an effort to speak, and his face expressed an eagerness to explain something, but Eugene with downcast eyes and pale, compressed lips, went on with his painful story.

"That night, after an interview with my sister Violet, in which the dear girl proved her sisterly tenderness for me, I sat alone in my own apartment, brooding over my unhappy fate, and wondering whether some terrible doubt about my paternity had not influenced Marian to his secret.

"A sound broke on my unhappy reverie, and I looked quickly up to behold a man whom I had never seen, bending over me with a strange and sinister look.

"My room was separated from the rest of the house-chamber, and for a moment thought it was that he had been hired by Mrs. Blanchard, as an assassin, to kill me forever of my ubiquitous presence.

"He spoke and dispelled my fool thought, but not until I had caught him by the throat, and thrown him on the carpet.

"He seemed surprised at my strength, but not in the least frightened, and while pointing to me to hold on, and make no row, proceeded to inform me that he knew who I was, and could show me how to obtain my rights if I would trust myself to his guidance, and follow him to the house of an old man who had been my grandfather's slave."

"His name's Soubette," he continued, "and he's the father of this woman here, that has passed herself off for your mother. Oh, don't she a smart one though, and hasn't she fooled the French lawyers and nobles into believing her to be your father's widow!" Her own dad is almost as much afraid of her as he is of the police, and you couldn't get him to say a word that could be used in evidence against her, if he knew it. But what you must do, is to wait your time, and gather your facts. You find plenty of 'em, and I'll help you, for fair pay. When you've found out all you want to know, just come down on her, and sell her like a ghost at day-break, and then you can march in and take possession."

"I demurred at first to this understanding, and said something about putting my case in legal hands, but the man interrupted me with a contemptuous laugh."

"'You ain't got no case yet, 'cept your suspicion,' said he, 'and you can't get a lawyer worth having to move on them. No, no, you be advised by them that knows, and pick up your information first. I hope you ain't afraid to trust yourself with me; a gent that is trained to such strength as you've got ought to be easy scared.'

"I assured him that I was not in the least scared; and having received a word or two of strange information from a woman who accosted me a day or two previous, which agreed with what I now heard, my resolution was soon taken. I parted from my old home without one word of explanation, and in the dead of night followed the man to his town abode, where I remained in hiding, following his direction, and gaining all the knowledge I could find in my researches at the house of the old countess, for such I much confess was the calling of my grandfather's former valet."

"You saw me there," said Heather-ton, ridding his head. "I have seen Mrs. Blanchard lately, and a woman more utterly unscrupulous or more completely at action in every movement and word, I never held."

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"She was a very different expression from the one that had marked her face, the day she withdrew her patronage from Miss Gauzebo's establishment, yet she was undoubtedly the very same. Ned Carroll had Marian seen her face last as it beamed upon the assembled group, full of interest and affection, she would have long ago carried into execution the thought that had often come to her in her desperate need, of appealing to the lady who had witnessed the cause of her first trouble and misfortune in business.

All three gentlemen turned toward her, as she entered, but it was to Dr. Heatherston only that she spoke.

"There is a person here whom I wish you would see," she said in a low tone; "please come with me to the reception room on the lower floor, and you can come back and explain it all to Eugene and my husband presently, if you decide that it is best."

(To be continued in our next. Commenced in No. 8.)

MY CHUM.

BY JACK RATTIN.

He was a slight built, active little fellow, the model of a foretopman, and it was as refreshing to look at his face as a drink to a thirsty sailor. His face was smooth as a girl's, and his dark eyes and merry smile made the foretopsail of the Delaware seem brighter when he moved about.

The Delaware was a tea ship, homeward bound from Canton, loaded to the hatches with chests of fragrant tea. The owners were so anxious that they had been opened, for by the time the boys had stashed up each a monkey, pistol, and a knife, a large junk bumped against one of the lee-boats, and rough rappings-arms were thrown aboard.

We had a good crew, and as the beggars all wanted to board at the first open port, we had made lively work. They were big, black, ugly-looking things, and if I do say it, fought like tigers. There were twenty more forced back a little, while Ned Carroll had got us all aboard.

Just then I could see a queer shaped peasant fluttering in the haze, and I had the deck to the leeward.

"Boat ahoy! what boat is that?"

A wild yell was the answer, and the men jumped for the arm-chests. It was well when they had been opened, for by the time the boys had stashed up each a monkey, pistol, and a knife, a large junk bumped against one of the lee-boats, and rough rappings-arms were thrown aboard.

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"Boat ahoy, what boat is that?"

"Come on, you scoundrels," yelled the captain, shaking a bloody sabre at us. "Die like men!"

But we didn't come, and they fell back, step by step, leaving bloody tracks behind them. Just then a low rumbling was heard, and something which glittered as brightly as the steel blades polished out between the masts, and revealed a brass six-pounder, which the captain was carrying to Calcutta for a gunnery company.

"Clear the way, Ned," cried the captain, looking over his shoulder. "Get the gun ready, and fire it into the side of the boat." Ned Carroll leaped the gun, and the ball went through the side of the boat, killing a dozen men.

"There were twenty more forced back a little, while Ned Carroll had got us all aboard.

Just then I could see a queer shaped peasant fluttering in the haze, and I had the deck to the leeward.

"Boat ahoy, what boat is that?"

"Come on, you scoundrels," yelled the captain, shaking a bloody sabre at us. "Die like men!"

So the tale ended.

She knows me and why I am here, and I tell you there is no harm in it."

"Don't you know I'd known you into the sun of a stink lamp in about two seconds if I thought you was bad anything?" I said. "Don't you be a

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THE TRYSTING.

BY LOUISE SCHERLERN.

Within the garden, while the roses slumber
In all moonlight clear,
And all the earth is wrapped in dewy silence,
My lady's step to hear.
I know you will not tell me,
She is very yet half-told.
To keep her try, but night is slowly waning,
And Diana's orb half pale.
But I am not the last to speak on me—
Dear Diana, do you know?
The rapturous pain of mortal or the sultry
Unshamed seas of woe?

Purchased, in yester evening chamber, sleeping
In cedar garments white,
She lies, regarding how the watch is keeping;
She lies, ye whispering winds that near her
wander.

How sweet my lady seems,
Like to a very lily, which, in summer,
Of sweet Southaphry dreams.
My lady's smile is bright like the sun;
My lady's voice is clear, sweet low than breathes,
Aon the earth too deep!

O! so sweetly aspen, trembling, over trembling,
One moment still yet girt,
The while, in breathing forth my love in sight,
My heart may find relief.

And so I wait, ye little birds, the fitful warbling,
A sweet bird of night!
Hiding from restles day thy shrinking sorrows,
Too sensitive for light!

The stars are red in my thrumming bosom
Vibrates, a thrill again;
Paint with the fragrant sighs of sleeping roses,
Joy merges into pain.

How strangely gleams the moonlight on the roses,
So long the night, so lone,
Listen, methought I heard a footfall stealing,
The light thy step, my own.

No! 'tis only the wind that faintly sighing,
Beats through the darkness though,
No longer hope, so late into thy trying.
My lady comes no more now,

See, where the moon, before the column shuns
Meeting.

Lets fall a wounding beam,
Or it stay white robes alone.

JESSIE DALE.

The Conductor's Daughter;

OR,

The Plot Against the Pennsylvania Railroad.

BY BURR THORNBURY, Esq.,
AUTHOR OF "ST. LÉGER'S LOVE," "RAVENSWOOD,"
"SKALE, THE SCOUT," "AO-
NE AXME," ETC.

CHAPTER XXII.

A STRANGE PRISON.

The quickly-conceived and daringly-executed plot to subvert his rival was, as we have said, undertaken by Cecil Parnell more in the spirit of reckless delight in anything of the kind, than in the hope that Harry's relatives would thereby be led to suppose that he was dead.

Cecil certainly did not think the fraud would be long undiscovered by Harry's relatives—his father or whoever might seek for him. He did hope and calculate, however, that the Dales would not for a considerable period arrive at the truth of the matter. He knew, or believed at least, that the two families had had no intercourse with each other except through Harry; and with him removed, they would probably still remain apart. Their social positions were so different. Mr. Lester as a director of the Pennsylvania Company might know Mr. Dale as an employee, but nothing more.

As for Cecil himself, we may as well say here, he was already back in the Quaker City, thinking more of Jessie Dale than of anything else. He knew that Harry was out of his way for a time, and he intended to make the most of his absence.

How long Harry would remain a prisoner—if indeed he were to remain a prisoner except by death—depended now in a great measure upon the will of Belmont Matthewson, who, as we shall see, had designs of his own in relation to the captive.

Harry's great anxiety was to ascertain of his keepers if, possible, in what sort of a building he was confined, and its location in the city. It seemed to him that it must be a subterranean apartment, for no light of day was visible—a lamp relieved the obscurity of the place—and he felt that it was low, and shut from the wholesome air of an upper region. Yet the world and freedom could not be far away, for the subdued roar of the hurrying life of the great city came to his ears. He therefore questioned the dwarf, but obtained no satisfaction, for the little fellow told him he had talked too much already.

The next day he renewed his inquiries, and with more success.

"It may satisfy you," said the dwarf, "to know just where you are, and then you won't be bothering yourself with thoughts of escape. You can get away; you need not cry out in the hope of having some one bear you, for I will always be near to answer first. Ha! ha! you will find me a faithful jailor. I'm an odd, demonish little wretch, and you might guess half that's done in it underhand."

The latter was not what our hero most desired to hear, though he was repulsively interested, nevertheless, in the creature's account of himself.

"But will you not inform me in what sort of a place I am confined?" he asked.

And the dwarf answered quite glibly:

"You are down among the treasure-vaults and fire-places—a safe place to hold a prisoner. It's a private banking-vault, but we use different uses of it.

You're the first out that's been here.

It's queer world, my fair sir—you wouldn't guess half that's done in it underhand."

"I guess enough now," returned Harry.

"I am in the power of that infernal junto at which I have heretofore only laughed. There is villainy about more gigantic than was ever before known, and I am made a victim, perhaps, that others may be handled through me. But you will feel in your evil designs, if you think to use me as your instrument. I will die here rather than aid you in any way. I hardly know what to believe or suspect, but I am convinced now of the existence of an organization of corruptionists who think themselves strong enough to defy law and attempt any evil."

"You will be further convinced on that point," laughed the dwarf, unpleasantly, "before you are released from their hold. No man leaves their hands until it is *safe* for them to give him freedom again. I tell you this, young sir, because I see you are obstinate and plucky; you will have to become tractable, or your stay here will be neither short nor agreeable, unless—"

"Unless you choose to make it very brief indeed, I suppose, and cut my earthly career as short as the railroad disaster merely missed doing."

Again the little imp laughed and ogled.

"Will you furnish me with a paper containing an account of the accident?" asked Harry.

"I can oblige you that far," was the reply, in what our hero thought was rather a malignant tone, notwithstanding the readiness with which the request was acceded to.

The dwarf disappeared from the place, and soon came back with several copies of different journals of late issue.

"He is in soul and body a leper," she said, with a look of loathing.

"Jay Marbury can save you from the degradation of a marriage with such a man—such a creature rather. His plan is to abstract from your once reputed father's papers the proofs of your real parentage—which Belmont Matthewson undoubtedly possesses, and then induces you to become his wife. I, as an accessory to the plot, am to receive five hundred thousand of the millions of dollars which await in chancery your claim."

"You cannot, I am sure, lend yourself to the furtherance of such a wicked scheme."

"I can and will, if you will only give your approval of it."

"You insult me, Mr. Gray, to propose such action on my part," said Mrs. Rowland with something like the old fear and disgust she had felt for Jay Marbury. This man, after all his kindness and apparent honesty, was only a smoother hypocrite than the rest—he was only trying to win the promised five hundred thousand in the easiest way.

"I do not intend to insult you, Mrs. Rowland," he said in a tone that somehow reassured her in spite of her rising distrust. "I do not urge this action upon you. I only show you how you may escape a greater degradation. If you do not become the wife of Jay Marbury, he will certainly endeavor to deliver you into the hands of your old persecutors."

"And will you not save me from that fate?" she implored.

"Perhaps—perhaps, Mrs. Rowland," he said with real and well simulated emotion: "you will marry me, and go by that door to safety."

"No, no! I will do nothing dishonorable. I may be made the victim of wrong, but I will not consent to my own degradation."

"I am a wife, Mr. Gray, and nothing can win me from my allegiance to my loved George Washington."

Mrs. Rowland regarded him strangely.

A cold sympathy drew her toward him; she felt that he would yet serve her and save her.

"I will leave you," he said, abruptly.

"But I promise for the time to protect you, Mrs. Rowland. Have no fear while you remain in this house." And with a bow he went out.

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"He is in soul and body a leper," she said, with a look of loathing.

"I hear the bustle and roar."
True, any fool might reason as far as you have done. You are not a great distance from Broadway."

"I am in New York, then? Speak, you little wretch, and enlighten me further."

Harry felt irritable and indignant. He did not like the tantalizing manner of the dwarf, and had no patience with him.

"You're a prisoner," said the latter, vindictively.

"A prisoner?"

"Yes, my young sir."

"How is that? Tell me, or I shall go mad."

"Go mad if you want to; I guess they won't care."

"I won't go mad. By whom was I brought here, and with what object?"

"By my employers: I serve them without question."

"Was I not injured in a railroad accident?"

"It's no harm to tell you that much: you were."

"And I was carried here insensible?"

"How well you remember what you never knew," laughed the little ogre.

Harry, in spite of himself, owing to his weakened condition, began to feel depressed and strangely concerned.

"You had better not talk any more now," said his attendant. "I will bring you food and drink."

He disappeared, and soon returned with some refreshments, of which Harry was not particularly pleased.

"I am anxious for you, Mr. Lester," he said.

"I am a wife, Mr. Gray, and nothing can win me from my allegiance to my loved George Washington."

Mrs. Rowland regarded him strangely.

A cold sympathy drew her toward him; she felt that he would yet serve her and save her.

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herself with the tears. "If she would only talk to me or let me talk to her. Shall I pour it out, my lady?"

"Please."

Not another word, and she wheeled the state barge close to the forlorn Alma's side, with her heartfelt pity almost brimming over her eyes in tears.

"She'll maybe come round by and by," she thought to herself, "and open her heart to me. I'd comfort her poor thing, if she'd let me. I am sure it would do her good to speak."

She lingered for a moment; but Alma did not speak again, or betray any further consciousness of her presence, so she softly closed the door and left her to herself.

She found her master's valet waiting for her down stairs at a comfortably-spread table. Mr. Brown clearly loved a good meal, and never failed to do justice to the good things at Nortonshall whenever his master's tumults took him there.

"Well, how is she?" he asked, when the housekeeper returned. "Is she pretty quiet and reasonable?"

"She's as quiet as a stone, and as hard, the housekeeper replied. "But maybe she'll change again. She used to be as sweet spoken as she is pretty, poor lady, when she was here before."

"And so she is now. Whatever may have happened, I will say this for her, she's as sweet and gentle a lady as any one could wish to attend upon. One part of the journey up the night she was losing her wits, and I wished myself well through the streets, I can tell you, but when I went into the same carriage with her she was as gentle as a lamb, and as polite to me as though I'd been a lord. It's a queer last scene, and I can't make it out."

Mrs. Jones sniffed and passed her lips very tight, as though she would like to say something if she dared.

"A very queer business," the valet repeated, closing his chin.

He was very anxious to know Mrs. Jones's opinion on the state of affairs, and he had not long to wait. She ruffled her feathers like an indignated hen, and spoke her mind on the spot, emphatically.

"It's a queer business and a wicked business, Mr. Brown, and I don't believe a word of it. It's a hard thing to say of one's master, and maybe you're going to tell him of it, but he's a hard man, and it's my belief he's doing all this to my lady for his own wicked ends, that I do, and that's my mind."

"I'm not one to carry tales to my master, Mrs. Jones— a little more sugar, if you please, thank you—but I do think him a good man any more than you, but I'm very much afraid there's truth in the affair."

"Nonsense! How wicked enough to make up anything."

"He didn't make this up."

"He didn't, indeed. It's quite true, I'm sure of it, that—"

"What?" That he caught my lady, that most horrid thing, up—stair-ya—"

"In another room, ma'am. Yes, that's just it. It's plain speaking, but it's true I'd thank you for the pepper. This is a lie, though, dear. Some of our own best, I suppose?"

"Yes, you're one of the lot off the Wentworth farm. But about my lady? How do you know it isn't all the together, this lies tale?"

"It is no tale. I only heard what my husband said and he was in a towering rage, but it was true, for all the house was talk about it. He can't keep his own countenance when he gets into a position."

"Not at any other time, I think. From a boy he was always terribly quick with his tongue. Try a bit of the oyster pie, Mr. Brown." Richard Barton shot the phone back last week, and they seem in prime condition.

"Not a morose more, thank you, just a cup more tea, if you please. It was a sad journey here, and it seems to warn us."

Mrs. Jones poured out the tea, and, like a wise woman, held her tongue now that she had got rid of the valet going. She knew she had just enough to make him talk, and that she should hear all she wanted in the course of time, for Brown loved a good gossip as well as any one, and generally confided to her without scruple still that was going on.

"Oh, I'm afraid there's no doubt about it. He went on at length, after sipping his fourth cup of tea. "The young gentleman, Mr. Vassour, was at Westerpark then, no denying that; and there was going to be a duel, but my lady said coming along, that— But there, poor soul, I half think she went off her head, for I don't see how she could have done any thing in the matter."

"What did she say?"

"That I need not trouble myself about my master, for that he was quite safe, there would be no duel—she had stopped it."

"Why, I thought you said she was looking up all the time?"

"So the folks at the inn told me. My lord brought her straight in from the hedge, and locked her in her room. She most have sent him in some way."

"I hope to goodness nothing has happened between them; that it be an awful thing for either of them to be cut off with their hearts full of evil passions."

"We had soon known, the valet said. "If anything has gone wrong, they will send to London, and then some one will be in to telegraph to me. But I think my lady was positive, from the way she spoke."

Mr. Brown's heart was set at rest presently, as far as his master's safety was concerned, by a telegram which he received from his commanding his return to London instead of Westerpark. It was dated from his lordship's town residence, and the communication contained nothing that could baffle any sort of catastrophe.

In the servants' hall, gaily run high on the joy of Alma's sudden return and the preparations made for it, and various guests, we were bidden to sit to the reason thereof. Most of them were of opinion that there could have been no quarrel, or their master would not have had so much fuss made about his wife's reception; but one or two of the older ones, who had been in the service of the present lord and of his father before him, were inclined to a somewhat different way of thinking.

"Don't tell me," said the coachman, a hard-featured, grim old Yorkshireman who had grown gray at Nortonshall, and hoped to die in his place. "Four things, sir, offended him, somehow, and he'll never forgive her. I know the Nortonshalls well. It's been always the same—father and son—from one generation to another. They can smile and speak gentle words, and be as quiet as a cat with its claws covered, but there's always mischief brewing for all that. My lord wouldn't like the world to say he ill-treated his wife, so he sends word here that she's to be received with all honor, and she comes here to every other young life like a trap laid in a golden cage."

"But what can we have done?" asked the maid. "It's all nonsense, coachman."

My lady came down here for the sake of her health, that's all."

Nortonshall's a queer place to send any one to get health on the edge of a hard winter, and that's what this one will be, Mrs. Cook," the coachman replied, a little nettled. "However, time will show."

"Yes, she repeated. "Except one, I will say it, Mrs. Jones—there's one else, and it don't much matter now. It won't be for long."

"My dear, it's wise to talk of it—even to think of it," the old lady said, quietly. "I don't believe you have done anything wrong—notting shall make me think it, but those words are treason up sometimes, and do mischief when we least expect."

"You won't make a foolish, and I shan't talk to any one else. On it's a hard thing to be alone in the world with those who should be kind to you all harsh and cruel."

"It's a dreadful mistake, my coming here in this way, but a fool would listen to a word I could say, though I'd tell him the simple truth and nothing else—Heaven knows I did!"

"There, my dear, it will all come right some day, be sure of it—truth always triumphs in the end."

"Yes, but broken hearts and blighted lives are apt to come first. What the better of truth, trim shall I be if it's song of victory is sung over my grave? And if such an end ever comes to my miserable history as the truth comes to light, it will come too late. I shall be dead, with the odium of broken vows lying heavy upon me under the green turf."

"Oh, no—don't think that."

"I do. You think me wild and crazy when I talk about being murdered; but it is in my heart. My death will be accomplished by some means."

"My lady!"

"Ah, you good soul, don't look so horrified at me, you don't know your master yet. Don't go away. Let me tell you the whole wretched story, and then you will understand my fears."

"They are only fears, my dear, be sure of that!"

"I'm not sure. I tell you I know what Lord Nortonshall has in his heart as well as if we were on my deathbed, dying by his side."

"Frank, and he wants to give you some orders about tomorrow morning. Cook, have something tasty for my lady's supper in half an hour."

"She took nothing with her, and I must try and persuade her to eat."

"Maria Marsh, go and see to the fire up-stairs, and tell her ladyship that I shall have the honor of attending her till her maid arrives, and of all you ones for all, let me beg that I hear no more such rubbish as you have just been telling. It would annoy my lady very much if it got to her ears, and as for my lord—well, it would be a short stay of you if you would make it."

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"Not a morose more, thank you, just a cup more tea, if you please. It was a sad journey here, and it seems to warn us."

Mrs. Jones went up to Lady Norton,

had a room with a tempting little supper on a tray. She would not let any of the servants carry it up, for the very sorry face her young mistress, and was anxious to shield her all she could from prying eyes and it quickly forgave.

Alma's mood had quite changed in the time she had sat up stairs alone. The hard-tempered, somewhat sultry maid had repelled all the housekeeper's attentions had passed away, and left her to nothing but hopeless sorrow and terror. She had partially undressed, and let down the heavy bands of her hair. She had been brushing and arranging it for the night, when the sense of her lament came upon her so strongly that she let the brush fall from her hand, and burst into tears.

It was then Mrs. Jones found her, sitting before the bright fire in her soft white dressing gown, and looking so forlorn that the good-natured woman's heart went to her.

"Poor dear," she said, taking a few steps, depositing the tray she held on a stand, she went up to the drooping figure, and touched Alma's shoulder. "My lady," she said, quietly.

Lady Nortonshall raised her head, and strove to resume her former coldness and hauteur.

"What is it?" she said, shortly, and endeavored with all her might to still her quivering lips and keep down the choking in her throat.

It was no use. Her grief must have been so great, her spirits had given way utterly, and she could only hear her head on her hands again, and weep on with choking sobs that made the old housekeeper fear that she would go into hysterics.

"My lady," she said, taking one of Alma's cold hands respectfully, and closing it, "I have brought your supper. Try and eat something. You are quite overcome."

"I can't eat," Alma replied. "I want nothing but to die at rest."

"Hugh, Hugh, Hugh!" the old lady said, speaking as though her tortured master were a child of her own. "Don't cry like that, my poor child. It will all come right some day."

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THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

small hand, the glove on which looked—I think the phrase belongs to Charles Hedges—“as if it had been ‘moulded on.’” As she raised her veil, he beheld a pretty girlish face, with a dimple and blush rose-color on either cheek, and the most innocent dark-blue eyes in the world.

He had expected to see a gushing French school girl who would have embraced him, and bedewed his immaculate shirt bosom with tears; but here was a beautiful, self-possessed young woman!

She took his offered arm, saying a few words with a pretty foreign accent, and they proceeded to the carriage, followed by a sturdy Breton bonnie.

They were scarcely seated in this conveyance when a cold perspiration broke out on Mr. Barr’s brow. He had forgotten to order rooms for his ward and her attendant! Unhappy man! This was the climax to his morning of disasters.

He gazed about him in agonized perplexity. He caught sight of a familiar face in the crowd. It was that of Ralph Barr, his nephew. Now, Ralph Barr was not in his uncle’s good books, for two reasons—Ralph was poor, and Ralph was independent. But drowning men will grasp at anything or anybody—even at nephews whom they despise. Mr. Barr threw himself half-way out the window, and gesticated to such an extent that Marie, the bonne, observed—

“Your guardian is a maniac, ma’amelle, like the rest of his compatriots. Marie’s experience of Americans in France had led her to conclude that all the inhabitants of our free country were mad and insane.

Ralph at last saw his uncle, and became aware that the signals of distress were being made with the object of attracting his attention. He approached the carriage and his hat to Miss Louise, and then lent an attentive ear to the whispered tale of his uncle’s dilemma. Mr. Barr proposed that Ralph should enter the carriage, while he himself went ahead, to order the rooms to be prepared. Ralph made no objection. Mr. Barr ordered the driver to take a long circuit, in order to give him time. He then got out, Ralph taking the vacated seat.

Before the carriage wheels had turned half a hundred times neither Petronille nor Ralph cared how long the journey might last. What two sensible young people would not try to mutually agreeable under such circumstances?

Ralph was a handsome, open-hearted young fellow, with a vein of pleasant humor in his nature, and Petronille a damsel who could not help being charming. What but a very delightful flirtation could result?

At first Marie looked severely on the interior, but when on cross-examining him she discovered that he preferred ouverte and galette to beefsteak and potatoes—which latter dish she firmly believed to be common to all barbarians—she allowed herself to be mollified.

Ralph attempted to be witty. Petronille smiled, and finally laughed. Marie was shocked. To think of a young girl laughing two weeks after her father’s death! The inappropriateness deserved reprobation; Marie accordingly said something about “votre pere.”

The dimples died out of Petronille’s cheeks at the words; a sad, thoughtful look came into her eyes, and Ralph could not win another smile from her.

When they reached the hotel, he asked permission to call the next day to inquire after Petronille.

Petronille sullenly replied that she didn’t think a half-hour’s ride would have any serious effect on her constitution; however, if he were very anxious, he might call on his uncle.

Ralph said that he was very anxious, and that he would certainly call—but not to see his uncle, he added to himself.

“You are too mild with young gentlemen,” observed the privileged Marie, after he had gone. “You must keep them at a distance, or they won’t respect you. Par example, ma’amelle, look at me; when Pierrot Foyer said he liked me better than any girl in my village, I just took off my sabot, and knocked him on the head with it. And what was the consequence, ma’amelle?” pursued Marie, triumphantly. “What was the consequence? Why, he has never troubled me since!”

Having thus delivered herself, Marie began the pleasant employment of comparing her present surroundings with those to which she had been accustomed to at home—much to the disadvantage of the elegant apartments which Mr. Barr had provided.

A week passed. Mr. Raymond Barr was agreeably surprised to find that his ward gave him no trouble whatever. She generally remained in her own rooms, meeting him only at tea. She at first made some gentle overtures—such as lighting his moustache and bringing his slippers—but Mr. Barr, who preferred the attentions of his valet to those of any woman alive, rather discouraged these services.

The sedate old sinner congratulated himself on the fact that Petronille’s father had died so recently. It obviated the necessity of taking the young lady to concerts, operas, etc. He invited her, however, to ride in the Park.

“I thank you, monsieur,” she answered, blushing with pleasure at this unexpected compliment on his part, for, despite adding enchantment to the view, she regarded her guardian as one of the wisest men living, although a little cold—“I thank you, but I have already engaged myself to ride this afternoon.”

“Engaged yourself?” repeated Mr. Barr, in surprise.

“Is not that what you call it? I mean that I promised Monsieur Ralph, your nephew, to ride with him.”

“The deuce!—shame! I must say, mademoiselle, it seems a little singular that you should accept the young gentleman’s invitation without—”

“And is it not the custom here?” interrupted Petronille, naively. “I did assure monsieur, your nephew, that in my country young gentlemen and ladies do not ride alone together—that is, without a chaperon—but he answered me that here it is different.”

“I’m not objecting to that,” said Mr. Barr, dubiously; “but I was not aware that my nephew had called on you.”

“Oh, yes, several times; but you were always absent at the times. He has asked for you often, and he appeared triply tired that you were not at home—he remained very long waiting for your return.”

“Oh, no doubt,” murmured Mr. Barr, sarcastically.

“If you wish it,” continued Petronille, with ill-disguised anxiety, “I will excuse myself—”

“You may as well go, having promised. Consult me, however, before accepting another invitation, if you please.”

Petronille flitted out with a relieved look, and was soon heard trilling a waltz from Crispin in her own room.

“Things have gone pretty far,” concluded Mr. Barr, “for he had heard Ralph’s whistle that waltz a hundred times.”

Mr. Barr was too wise to provoke revolt by open opposition, so Petronille er-

ranged a toilette which excited the envy of many a fair dame that afternoon, in spite of its sombre hue.

The ride in the Park was to Petronille and Ralph a glimpse of Elysium. If love’s young dream only hadn’t such a tubile-like habit of bursting when brightest!

Now, Mr. Raymond Barr had a little plan arranged in his mind. He had another nephew, Richard Barr—an indolent, plodding fellow, who worshipped money, loving pleasure and dissipation next—provided they were cheap. This nephew was at present in Cuba, managing a business affair of his uncle’s. As a reward, Richard had plainly hinted that he expected to be started in business on his own account.

But Mr. Barr was of a frugal mind—when others were concerned.

“My ward has about \$10,000 well invested,” he reasoned; “if I marry her to Richard, he will be provided for, and I’ll save money; therefore, Petronille Belvoir shall become Mrs. Richard Barr. Le roit le vent!”

But when Mr. Barr discovered that Ralph had got ahead of him, he was perplexed. To protect Ralph the house might lead to an alteration, and Mr. Barr hated anything disagreeable. And yet he must find some way of separating the two, until Richard’s arrival. The latest was too busy to pay him a visit at present. It would not pay to bring him on the scene. Besides, Mr. Barr doubted whether Richard would appear again, when contrasted with Ralph.

Richard Barr got himself up regardless of expense one day. The colors of the rainbow revolved gorgeously in his cravat. A marvellous imitation opal and pearl ring encircled one of the thick canary-colored fingers of his glove. His coat was perfect in fit and he shone odors aromatic from his very grey locks. He intended to visit his birds next.

With all confidence he carelessly gave his card to Miss Lemminia’s next little maid and took his seat in the parlor, conscious that several young lady pupils were gazing upon their admiration in covetous glancing places.

The little maid took the card up to her mistress. Miss Lemminia took the postcard and read—

and congratulated himself on his own superior advantages. “If you look at the back of me card there, you’ll find me lowest prince, Mr. Barr. Bring viage, me deer fellow!”

Richard Barr took the card and placed them in his pocket book. In a few moments the steamer was putting toward the sea.

He reached Nantes about the time mentioned in his uncle’s letter to Miss Lemminia, and Ralph a glimpse of Elysium. If love’s young dream only hadn’t such a tubile-like habit of bursting when brightest!

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“It is better for a woman to be laughed at for not being married, than to be unable to laugh because she is married.”

“The first brick house in Detroit was erected in 1807 by Benjamin Woodward, author of the poem ‘Old Oaken Bucket,’ who still resides in the city.”

“Miss Perry, Schenckill, Pa., tried to kill herself with a knife because her lover has given cold shoulder to her.”

“An Augustus, Ga., farmer recently discovered that a dog belonging to a neighbor was in the habit of killing one of his cows for his own benefit. The cow did not seem to object.”

“A couple at Glidden, Iowa, lately married themselves in the presence of church and congregation, simply announcing their intentions and kissing each other.”

“A girl in Vienna, Indiana, lately married a wasp, which stung her in the throat, and she died from suffocation on account of the swelling.”

“A Lehigh county physician claims to have been present at the birth of 7000 children in that country.”

“Mason husbands in Ulster are said to be cutting down expenses, by reducing the number of their wives.”

“A teacher at Clairo, Ill., lately thrashed a small boy nearly to death because he wouldn’t multiply 63 by 7.”

“A Massachusetts gentleman, recently deceased, provided in his will that the horse he rode during the war should be taken great care of during the remainder of its life, and when dead should be stuffed and placed in a glass case.”

“A Nevada paper recently contained the following brief local: ‘The many friends of Bill Thomson will regret to hear that he was hashed up by a cutlass the other day on Nixon’s Hill, while lying in wait to shoot a Chinaman.’”

“Santiago, Chile, has been holding a successful ‘Exposition,’ which included, among other attractions, a Cannibal Indian of Terra del Fuego, called Joso, who was captured about two months ago by the Governor of the Magellan Colony on board of a schooner, whose captain, mate and three crew were eaten by the said Fuegian and two others.”

“George Woodley, an errand boy, sixteen years of age, committed suicide at Rockford, while in a state of depression caused by the fear that a promised rise of wages would be withdrawn from him in consequence of his having contracted the smallpox.”

“Some letters were recently received from Europe, at the New York post-office, bearing very remarkable addresses. One was directed to ‘Cape of Town Hall’ Broadway, Massachusetts, State of New York; another to ‘Montevideo, Florida, South America, United States, N. Y.,’ and a third to ‘Lugut Savana, negotiated America, Washington street, New Jersey, U.S.A.’”

“How old is your mother?” asked a love-smitten old bachelor of the daughter of the widow who had snatched him.

“I don’t know, sir; my age varies from about forty-three to twenty-five,” was the artless reply, and the bachelor was disengaged.

“Are you quite certain?” began Petronille, anxiously.

“Certain!” repeated Miss Lemminia, in an irritated tone. “If I hadn’t to seek your guardian’s letter up in my room, I’d show it to you, if you doubt my word.”

Ralph stood silent, astonished during the dialogue. After awhile he began to understand that Mr. Raymond Barr had written a letter commanding Petronille to marry him. He was puzzled, but every other feeling soon gave way to joy, which Petronille shared, and did not attempt to conceal.

“I am now married, Miss Lemminia, and consequently I live at a hotel. The fashions of a wedding at such a place would be very embarrassing.”

“I don’t agree with my nerves; therefore I will not marry you.”

“I am sure,” continued the letter, “that my ward, having profited by your excellent example and instruction, (the fame of which has reached even to this distant shore,) will have no just a sense of duty to object to any husband which I have selected to be my dear Petronille’s husband.”

“How affectionately he writes,” thought Miss Lemminia, for judging from Marie’s description of him, she had concluded that he was a civilized being—Mephistopheles tempered by Lord Chesterfield.

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THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

Dec. 6, 1878.

LITTLE LIZZIE.

When the day is softly closing,
And the sun is in the west,
When all with brightness wane,
Heads and blossoms sink to rest—
The day is over, and the night
That can crown a day of care.
With folded hands my darling
Keeps to my heart evening prayer.

Oh, it is so sweet to see her,
With her little serious face,
And her earnest eyes uplifted,
As she looks up to me
Like a crown of light celestial.
Shines her falling golden hair
Sweptly around her head to listen
To my evening greeting prayer.

"Our Father," are the words,
And the thought is in his heart,
That it comes a troubled spirit;
"Our Father," here and mine—
So young, so fair and spotless,
How much we love her, how we wish
She were at home from Heaven,
She is not fit to enter in.

Little Lizzie, pure and gentle,
Keeps my beloved evening prayer,
Life may some day press upon her,
With the crosses and its care.
The world is not yet dead, leave them
To which human hearts will cling.
There still find a certain shelter
Underneath "Our Father's" wing.

SUSANNA J.

MRS. HOUGHTON'S PORTRAITS.

BY ANNIE H. JEROME.

"Yes, miss, things is handsome here, and I glad you happened down the old corridor, seeing as how this part of the house is not used once in a year, and so not much seen. And then, miss, things ain't only handsome, but fixed so, and it's certain that only a first class housekeeper like Mrs. Dell is, could do a job so tidy and tasteful. Besides that, Mrs. Dell she thinks of everything, as that picture over there proves more enough. Now, I'd dare swear, miss, that nobody but Mrs. Dell would a thought to put it in this out-of-the-way old room, and liver it all up with that pretty cloud of pink crepe and knotted ribbons."

Miss Keith glanced smilingly at the indignant Miss, asking, as Patty's tongue subsided:

"But why did Mrs. Dell cover it, Patty? What is it?"

Patty dropped brush and duster.

"Pretty," she repeated, for the instant more amazed than polite. "Pretty! Bless your heart, Miss Keith; why is Mrs. Houghton's living self, they say. And pretty! Oh, if you could just see it once!"

She is standing this way—and the plump little housemaid struck an attitude, which came near annihilating Miss Keith's gravity—"her big black eyes burning down upon you with such a loving look, and yet so scornful-like. She looks just as if she was mocking you with her love, Mrs. Dell says, and you can't for the life of you tell whether she's of Heaven or hell."

"But," objected Miss Keith, "Mrs. Houghton not big, black eyes, Patty, and we all know she's very near Heaven, besides—"

"La, miss, I don't mean Mr. Houghton's mother, bless her! I thought you knewed who I meant. Mr. Houghton's wife, Mrs. Harris Houghton," interrupted Patty, in her astonishment.

"Mr. Houghton's wife!" echoed Miss Keith, unbound amazement in every tone.

"Why, la! miss, don't you know about Mr. Houghton's wife?" asked the maid, in equal amazement. "I thought the whole world knowned about her; for it talked enough, dear knows, though, to be sure, nobody speaks of her here, except under the breath."

Miss Keith bent suddenly over her blouse. But it was a needless artifice, Patty had no eyes for the paling cheek thus crimsoned.

"Indeed, then, miss, it's no wonder," she eagerly continued. "Even, Mrs. Dell don't like to speak of them days, they were so much worse than ever, with Mrs. Houghton's cracks and tempests and tantrums, and the dear Lord only knows what besides." Then when she went away.

"Went away?" Miss Keith echoed, unwillingly thinking aloud, for she had no disposition to question a servant about this grief of Harris Houghton's life.

"Yes, miss, go she would, and go she did; and that was six years ago to a brother, who lives in Germany. Mr. Houghton tried hard to keep her, though I guess more from duty than love, for the love must a heart itself pretty soon, I take it, and she said boldly she hated him. Yet they say no words could tell how he loved her at first. And he was always kind even down to the day they parted. But I've often hearded there's a bit of sunshine for the unhappy, and Mr. Houghton surely got his when."

Mrs. Dell's voice in the hall brought Patty's story to a sudden close, and Miss Keith gladly took advantage of the interruption, and made her escape to her own room.

Locking the door behind her, she sank into the low window seat. Then the year of her life at Houghton Court flashed, panorama-like, before her mental vision.

"I thought he loved me," she murmur ed, chokingly. "But I see now that I am only a charming woman to him. So banish the sweet dream, Margaret Keith, and take up the old rusty life as if the dream had never been. God has work for the saddest and loneliest to do and do it as in God's sight."

And leaving her seat she brushed her somewhat disordered hair, and went down stairs.

"I am a few minutes behind time, Mr. Houghton. I hope you will pardon me, in consideration of my usual punctuality," she apologized, as she entered the library in which that gentleman sat.

"I will pardon you anything and everything," he said, without lifting his eyes from the bold flared sheet which engaged him. "But you will find enough to keep you busy now you are here."

She did not reply, but took her seat at the little writing-table which had been assigned to her, and Mrs. Houghton's companion, and Harris Houghton a occasional associate. For a long time she wrote steadily, but at last her head dropped on her hand, and she fell into a reverie so profound that Harris Houghton's movements were unnoticed till he withdrew the listlessly held pen from her fingers.

"I am ashamed of myself," she hastily said, again possessing herself of it.

"You have no cause to be," returned Mr. Houghton. "The weariness marked every line of your face is sufficient excuse. Leave these letters till afternoon or to-morrow, and go and rest." Margaret shook her head obstinately. "I am quite able to attend to them now, I assure you." And she dipped her pen into the ink.

"Can I tempt you with an hour's drive, then?" he urged. "You will be home again before my mother requires your services. What do you say?"

"Thank you from my heart; but I prefer not," she smiled, resolved to deny herself so dangerous a pleasure.

Finding persuasions useless he went back to his work. But when at the end of an

hour she left the room, he started up and strode to the window.

"I wonder what troubles her?" he thought, anxiously, "for there certainly is trouble hidden in the depths of those great brown eyes. I will add all this she shall hear the story this afternoon!"

But events proved unfavorable. Poor old Mrs. Houghton was suffering from a severe headache, and it was late twilight when Margaret commenced to leave the sick room for the piano. Here Mr. Houghton found her at last. He had caught up her red riding-hood on his way through the hall, and without a word proceeded to adjust it about her head and shoulders. And as he stood there knotting the ribbons under her chin with a lingering touch of his magnetic fingers, she could have solaced outright for the dreary, lovesick future.

"The moon is just rising; will you walk with me awhile?" he asked, breaking the sweet silence.

And without pausing for reply he drew her hand within his arm and led her down among the blossoming vases, tinkling fountains, and deep shadows of the old larches. Long they walked there, silent and thoughtful. At length Harris Houghton spoke, his voice low and husky.

"Miss Keith, you know of my past?

Something in the sweet gravity of Margaret's quiet "yes" prompted him to even greater abruptness. Taking one of the dainty hands nervously twisting the long ribbons he had knotted awhile before, he spoke:

"Margaret, will you turn my Nelly for me to-night, and tell me my future?" he asked with masculine eagerness.

"My father," he said, "was a man who—

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